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Linda McCulloch
Superintendent

DATE: January 14, 2008

TO: School Food Authorities (SFAs)

FROM: Christine Emerson, School Nutrition Programs Director

SUBJECT: Crediting of Corn Meal and Corn Flour for Grains/Breads Component

To be credited as a grains/breads component for the Food-Based Menu Planning approaches, grain products must be enriched or whole grain, or made from enriched or whole-grain meal and/or flour. Bran and germ are credited the same as enriched or whole-grain meal or flour.

For a number of years, the School Nutrition Programs allowed corn meal and corn flour to be counted as a whole grain for crediting the grains/breads component. On February 17, 2006, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) published a draft guidance entitled *Whole Grain Label Statements* that contained the following statement: "*Degerminated and bolted cornmeals should not be considered whole grain products because germ or bran has been removed during processing. Because the rest of the meal [flour] standards allow removal of some of the hull, these also should not be considered whole grain products.*" This clarification by the FDA of the standards of identity for "corn meal" and "corn flour" indicates that these products should no longer be considered as whole grains for the School Nutrition Programs.

Therefore, beginning July 1, 2008, to be credited toward meeting meal pattern requirements, corn must be labeled as:

1. "whole corn" (or other "whole" corn designations, such as whole grain corn, whole ground corn, whole cornmeal, whole corn flour, etc.), or
2. "enriched" corn (or other "enriched" corn designations, such as enriched yellow cornmeal, enriched corn flour, enriched corn grits, etc.).

SFAs are encouraged to implement this requirement as soon as possible, but no later than July 1, 2008, to ensure that students receive more nutritious grains/breads products.

If you have questions, please contact School Nutrition Programs at (406) 444-2501.

Source citation: U.S. Department of Agriculture memo TA 01-2008.